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ABSTRACT

This document contains five papers from a symposium on the purpose and place of human resource development (HRD). "An Introduction to a Debate on the Foundations of the Field: The Purpose and Place of HRD" (Robert W. Rowden) introduces issues related to workplace learning, which both adult education and HRD claim as an area of practice. "The Purpose of HRD Is to Improve Performance" (Richard A. Swanson, David E. Arnold) argues for improved performance at organization, work process, and/or individual contributor levels. "The Development of the Individual Leads to More Productive Workplaces" (Laura L. Bierema) presents a case for holistic employee development by reviewing the context of learning and development in the workplace, exploring the present crisis in individual development in organizational life, and presenting a framework for individual and organizational development. "HRD as Evolutionary System: From Pyramid-Building to Space-Walking and Beyond" (Verna J. Willis) proposes that accepting the model of HRD as an evolutionary system with an incumbent professional identity changes the rules for professional practice, field description, and field theory development. "To Earn or to Learn? The Meaning of Workplace Learning in HRD" (John M. Dirkx) argues for the "educative workplace" and the democratic ideal as a conceptual context in which to frame and guide HRD practice in the new and emerging workplaces. (YLB)

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26 Purpose and Place of HRD: Some Perspectives on the Field

Chair: Robert W. Rowden, Brenau University

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The Purpose of Human Resource Development is to Improve Performance
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The Development of the Individual Leads to More Productive Workplaces
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HRD As Evolutionary System: From Pyramid-Building to Space-Walking and Beyond
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An Introduction To A Debate On The Foundations Of The Field: The Purpose And Place Of HRD

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A number of issues indicative of an emerging field have become evident as the education of adults in the workplace becomes a major strategic thrust in many organizations.

Adult learning once was considered a social issue having little to do with business operations (Cook, 1977). However, the influence of overseas competition, new technology, and the changing nature of American employees has made the effective training and retraining of American workers more critical than ever before. The scope of this effort is staggering. Employers spend over $50 billion per year on formal employee training and education. Approximately $180 billion per year is spent on informal, on-the-job training. One in eight worker receive formal employer-sponsored job training each year. This represents an estimated 1.6 billion hours of training for 49 million people (Carnevale & Schultz,1990; Training Industry Report, 1995). In-house human resource development (HRD) departments offer more instruction per employee than such alternative sources as external vendors, educational institutions, labor unions, or trade and professional associations. Without question, the workplace seems to be the catalyst that is changing the nature of adult education (The Future of Workplace Learning and Performance, 1994).

The importance of all this activity cannot be overestimated. A literate, educated, inquisitive, problem-solving workforce is essential to the survival and competitiveness of business and industry. A labor force that has "learned how to learn" and continues doing so can give a company a powerful edge. Organizations are discovering and using knowledge of adult learning to upgrade the capacity of their employees to make new contributions to the success of the company.

While the last several decades have witnessed tremendous growth in the field or discipline of HRD, all this attention to workplace learning is not a new phenomenon. Pace, Smith, and Mills (1991) report that as early as about 1100 A.D. crafts training, guilds, and apprentice training were mechanisms for learning in the work environment. With the North American industrial revolution of the 1800s, the emphasis of workplace learning shifted to worker efficiency. The post-modern or information age has brought about yet another thrust–that of employee enhancement. Today, in most companies, employee enhancement focuses on the worth of the individual employee as a valued human being regardless of the kind of work done or the position held in the organization. With workplace learning evolving as a major strategic thrust in many organizations, the field of Adult Education and the newer field of HRD both attend to and claim adult learning in the workplace as major areas of study and practice.

Adult Education and Human Resource Development

Watkins (1989) feels that "adult education in business and industry is the fastest growing area of practice in the field of adult education in the United States. Yet as a field of inquiry, adult education in business and industry is relatively young" (p. 422). However, not everyone discusses adult education and human resource development (training and development) in the same breath. Many writers discuss the training and development of workers in the workplace as a field of inquiry separate from adult education.

Attempts are often made to distinguish between training (HRD) and adult education. Some adult educators feel that trainers are not engaged in education. Most trainers believe that they are. Adult educators tend to make this distinction: training is narrow in scope and involves only learning that is directly related to job performance, while adult education is concerned with the total human being and his or her insights into, and understanding of, his or her entire world. These attempts to distinguish between HRD and adult education belie the fact that both are concerned with the process of human learning.

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Historical context helps explain the divergent development paths of Adult Education and HRD. Research on Adult Education can be traced to Dewey's writing and Thorndike's studies of adults in the 1920s. Concurrently, the broad field of practice began professionalizing with the formation of the American Association for Adult Education, publication of seminal materials such as Linderman's The Meaning of Adult Education (1926), and the establishment of graduate programs to train practitioners in the field. Thus, systematic inquiry dating back to the 1920s has helped establish Adult Education as a bona fide field of study with a solid knowledge base in adult learning. The field of HRD, which also arose out of practice, was not supported by the same type of systematic inquiry until shortly after the Second World War. (Wexley & Latham, 1991).

While the concept that employers would have to offer some type of workplace learning first emerged in the early 1900s in organizations such as Westinghouse, General Electric, and Goodyear (Swanson & Torraco, 1995), the idea that workplace learning could help an organization improve effectiveness didn't come to the forefront in North America until around the time of World War II. During that period, the United States had to mobilize all its resources. Vast numbers of men and women entered the Armed Forces and an even greater number were mobilized into war-time production. However, most of the new workforce had little or no experience in the workplace, especially in manufacturing. It was then that training was seen as a means to easily, efficiently, and effectively give workers the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for production of the vast quality of war-time materials needed. Many of the methods used to train military personnel were adapted for use in the factories.

The post-war era saw a continuation of the training effort. While the veterans possessed the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to win a war, they had little knowledge about peace-time employment. It soon became apparent that the same training methods used during the war would be needed a while longer.

Due to the perceived positive effect that training had on the war- and post-war production effort, interest in training was at an all-time high. Training moved to the forefront. In 1945, a society for those doing training in organizations was formed. It was called the American Society for Training Directors and later changed its title to the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD). For perhaps the first time since the beginning of the industrial age, systematic research was being conducted on training to determine how to make it more effective and to understand its role in business success. These researchers came from many disciplines such as psychology, sociology and business, as well as education and adult education. It is this multidisciplinary approach that has left learning in the workplace wondering where its home really is.

The Purpose of Learning in the Workplace

The job of educating the workforce has come a long way since the 40s and 50s. In fact, the focus has shifted from just training to include training and development, career development, organization development, and to many, organizational learning. The title for the people doing this work has also shifted from simply trainer, to the now more encompassing, human resource development specialist or manager.

During the first half of this century when the workplace was less complex, the mission or purpose of the training effort was clear: teach workers how to do their job in the most efficient manner possible. The more efficient the worker, the greater the organization's profits. Workers were thought of as not being very bright; therefore, jobs were broken down to their smallest and simplest component. Training was directed primarily toward the cognitive and psychomotor domains (Cranton, 1989). Workers were viewed as just "cogs in the machine" and were easily replaced.

Slowly, over the next four decades, things began to change. Signs of the changing times included employers' needs for a more highly educated workforce, even in such traditional companies as steelmills and auto factories. Manufacturing jobs today require that workers have advanced skills in computer technology, robotics, engineering, and communications. The old "tough labor" or hands-on troubleshooting and the need for a strong back are no longer the primary characteristics of American manufacturing jobs. A decade ago, for example, only about 40 percent of production workers held high school diplomas compared with about 71 percent in 1995. Particularly noteworthy in recent studies by the Bureau of Labor Statistics is the finding that although the size of the workforce doing precision or specialized work has remained nearly constant over the last decade, the percentage of those workers with some college education has increased dramatically (National Skill Standards Project for Advanced High Performance Manufacturing, 1995).

These changes in the workplace have caused many in the field of workplace learning to examine the goal and purpose of their efforts (Keith & Patton, 1995). Many believe that the purpose of HRD should be performance improvement; others believe that if the focus is on developing the individual, the organization will also benefit.

Those interested in performance improvement usually use the term human performance technology and focus on strategies to engineer performance in organizations including the work processes and organizational systems effecting individual performance. The emphasis is on technical and skills training (Swanson & Torraco, 1995). In this view of workplace learning, the emphasis is on management engineering and work processes.

The other view of workplace learning holds that an individual is the organization. This individual growth and development approach believes that workplace learning is a long-term investment in the future of the organization (Cohen, 1994). Any learning opportunities contribute to organizational success by producing a more critical-thinking, problem-solving individual that has the ability to think and act independently in a rapidly changing workplace. Learning-how-to-learn or lifelong learning are major themes of this perspective. The concepts of andragogy first brought to current consciousness by Knowles (1980) in the 1970s and self-directed learning (SDL) emerge from this principally humanistic perspective that frames much of adult education. The emphasis is on individual development independent of work processes.

Summary

In summary, the concept of providing learning opportunities for adults in the workplace is not a 20th century invention. Almost since the idea of "work" itself, activities of some fashion have occurred to help ensure that workers had the skills they needed. Over the years, a field of study known as Adult Education began to emerge. Somewhat later, and frantically fueled by the World Wars, a specific, multidisciplinary area concerned with workplace learning also began to emerge. This area was identified as Training and Development, and later evolved to be known as Human Resource Development. The joint, but seemingly separate, development of Adult Education and HRD has left questions even today as to whether the two fields are in fact the same thing.

These and other issues may never be settled for it is this type of scholarly debate that fleshes out a fledgling field and provides it with solid underpinnings. Both sides of these debates make very convincing arguments as can be witnessed in the chapters that follow. As the process of educating adults in the workplace enters the 21st century, new issues and challenges will arise. Certainly the debate will continue.

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The Purpose of Human Resource Development is to Improve Performance

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What is the dependent variable of HRD? We argue for HRD having the purpose of improving performance at the organization, work process, and/or individual contributor levels. This view is founded on the premise that HRD, when practiced within productive organizations, should strive to contribute directly to the organization's performance goals.

The practitioner and research literature has had a running debate about the appropriate goals of human resource development (HRD). Some argue that HRD should focus on increasing the performance requirements of their host organizations and more directly the productivity of the work force. Others argue that HRD should focus on developing the individual in a broad manner without using bottom line results as the litmus test of an intervention's worth. The question can be rephrased as "What is the dependent variable of HRD?" Is it the measurable increase in performance which is the direct result of organizational development and/or personnel training and development or is it something else, like individual learning or participant satisfaction with an intervention?

This paper argues for HRD having the purpose of improving performance. This view is founded on the premise that HRD, when practiced within productive organizations, should strive to contribute directly to the organization's goals. These goals, based on a purposeful system needing to obtain effectiveness and efficiency survival minimums, are performance oriented. Consequently, it is the responsibility of HRD to focus on performance. This chapter proceeds as follows. First, the environment in which organizations operate is examined to gain a better understanding of their goals and responsibilities. Second, the purpose and goals of HRD within that organizational context are discussed. Last, the concept of performance is explored further to clarify understanding and to demonstrate that the performance versus learning issue may not be a source of conflict.

The Organizations in which HRD Operates

An organization is defined to be a productive enterprise having a mission and goals. Additionally, an organization should be thought of as a system, with definable inputs, processes, outputs, parts and purposes (Katz & Kahn, 1966). With this characterization of an organization in mind, HRD can be thought of as a sub-system which functions within the larger organizational system. To gain an understanding of the purpose of any sub-system, it is instructive to look at the goals of the larger system in which it operates.

One of the first lessons to be learned in any business school is that the purpose of a business organization is to maximize shareholder wealth through the effective and efficient procurement and allocation of scarce resources. This goal of business was not arrived at by chance or by fiat. Instead, it is merely a natural result of the economic and political environment in which business functions (at least in the United States). In that environment, individuals have the ability to invest money in a variety of vehicles which produce a return. It is natural that those investors would want to invest most heavily in that which produces the greatest return. The consequence of this is that organizations, in order to attract and retain investors, attempt to provide the greatest returns possible on shareholder investment. Public and non-public organizations operate under parallel principles with their effectiveness and efficiency gains used to reduce costs of services or their expansion. Thus, it is possible to find non-profits, funded through donations or taxes, outsourcing low performing sub-systems to more competitive, for-profit providers. From these effectiveness and efficiency principles, the goals of profit and non-profit organizations follow.

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Of the scarce resources that organizations must procure and allocate, perhaps none is more important to the success of the firm than human resources. Indeed, one large expenditure for many organizations is tied directly to workers, including wages, benefits, and HRD (Becker, G. S., 1993; Noe, et al., 1994). Of course, human resources are unique in that people have feelings, make plans, support families, and develop communities. However, human resources are similar to other resources in that firms
expect a return on the money invested in them (Cascio, 1987). Unless workers are contributing to the profitability and viability of an organization, then it would make economic sense to invest the money spent supporting those workers elsewhere.

The purpose of reviewing these realities of organizational survival is not to paint an unfeeling picture of the workplace in which people are merely cogs in an industrial machine, operating to line the pockets of greedy investors who do not care about the welfare of workers. There are numerous examples of companies who are meeting their financial goals and are also among the most progressive in terms of employee treatment and relations (Levering, & Moskowitz, 1994). Nowhere has it been shown that financial success is in direct conflict with employee happiness and well-being. Instead, these characteristics of organizations were reviewed because they define the organizational system in which HRD operates. By highlighting the purpose and goals of the larger system, insight into the purpose and goals of its sub-systems can be gleaned.

The HRD Sub-System

It is difficult to find an article about HRD without at least some reference to linking HRD to the strategic goals of the organization (e.g., Gill, 1995). It has become almost axiomatic that if HRD is to develop into a respected and useful player in organizations, then it will need to position itself as a strategically important partner. HRD will need to assume the same level of importance as the traditional core organizational processes: finance, production, and marketing (Torraco & Swanson, 1996).

What are the goals of the organizations with which HRD is to become strategically aligned? As mentioned, ultimately they are survival, return-on-investment., and even growth. More important for HRD, however, are the goals one step removed from this. These might include producing high quality goods or services, being the market leader, or having the most highly skilled work force. Each of these second order goals serves a singular purpose: to maximize return. The implications of each of these goals for the sub-systems responsible for carrying them out, however, are more specific and concrete. For example, if it is assumed that the production of high quality goods is an organizational goal, then production needs to focus on systems and processes which produce quality, marketing needs to focus on systems and processes which communicate quality, and finance needs to focus on systems and processes which insure that quality is supported. And of course, HRD needs to focus on systems and processes which insure that the human resources of the organization have the knowledge, expertise and attitudes to produce quality.

Performance is defined as the dependent variable in the form of organizational, work process, and/or individual contributor outputs of productivity. Using this definition, performance is the means by which organizations achieve their goals. Performance can be measured in many ways. Rate of return, cycle time and quality of output are three such possibilities. Additionally, it is important to make the distinction between levels of performance. Performance takes place and can be measured at the organizational, process, and individual levels.

If HRD should be aligned with the goals and strategies of the organization, and performance is the primary means by which the goals and strategies of organizations are realized, then it follows that HRD should be first and foremost concerned with improving performance at the organization, process, and individual levels. If HRD is to be a value-added activity of the firm, instead of a line item of cost which is to be controlled and minimized, then HRD practitioners need to be concerned about performance and how it enables organizations to achieve their goals.

HRD and Performance Improvement

How can HRD improve performance? There are many possibilities at the individual, process, and organizational levels. Figure 1 is a matrix of performance levels and variables which can aid in the diagnosis of performance problems (Swanson, 1994, p. 52). Within each cell are enabling questions which permit diagnosis of performance, but each cell can also serve as a conceptual framework for classifying performance interventions.

As an example, the Mission/Goal variable at the organizational level concerns whether the organization's mission and goals fit with various internal and external realities. If they do not, then most likely performance is being impeded. Assume that an organization's mission and goals do not fit the reality of its culture, and this is resulting in sub-optimized performance. HRD could attempt to solve this performance problem through structured intervention in a couple of ways, depending on the outcomes of detailed analysis. A process could be put in place to formulate mission and goals which accommodate the organizational culture. On the other hand, a cultural change process could be implemented which seeks to modify culture so that it is better aligned

Figure 1. Performance Diagnosis Matrix of Enabling Questions

PERFORMANCE VARIABLES ↓	Organization Level	ProcessLevel	Individual Level
Mission/ Goal	Does the organization mission/goal fit the reality of the economic, political, and cultural forces?	Do the process goals enable the organization to meet organization and individual missions/goals?	Are the professional and personal mission/goals of individuals congruent with the organization's?
System Design	Does the organization system provide structure and policies supporting the desired performance?	Are processes designed in such a way to work as a system?	Does the indvidual face obstacles that impede their job performance?
Capacity	Does the organization have the leadership, capital, and infrastructure to achieve its mission/goals?	Does the process have the capacity to perform (quantity, quality, and timeliness)?	Does the individual have the mental, physical, and emotional capacity to perform?
Motivation	Do the policies, culture, and reward systems support the desired performance?	Does the process provide the information and human factors required to maintain it?	Does the individual want to perform no matter what?
Expertise	Does the organization establish & maintain selection & training policies and resources?	Does the process of developing expertise meet the changing demands of changing processes?	Does the individual have the knowledge, skills, and experience to perform?

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with the mission and goals of the organization. This example and the performance diagnosis matrix show there can be numerous impediments to performance, and consequently numerous challenges and opportunities for HRD to improve performance.

Notice that adult learning plays an important role in most, if not all, of the matrix cells. If HRD is to change culture, then certainly the principles and practices of adult education will play an important role. It is not difficult to see, however, that there are potential needs for educating and training adults within every cell of the performance diagnosis matrix.

So what is the relationship between HRD and adult education. McLagan (1989) defined HRD as "the integrated use of training and development, organization development and career development to improve individual, group and organizational effectiveness." Swanson (1996) offered another definition of HRD along similar lines: "Human Resource Development is a process of developing and/or unleashing human expertise through organization development and personnel training and development for the purpose of improving performance." In both definitions, it is apparent that the outcome or dependent variable of HRD is performance.

Another less obvious implication is that HRD is broader than training or adult learning. There are HRD interventions which involve much more than training, and some (however rare) which might involve no training at all. For example, HRD might be involved in business process analysis and improvement which results in a newly engineered business process with minor modifications that are transparent to the worker, thus requiring no human resource training for implementation. If training were required, it would be a relatively small part of the entire intervention.

These remarks should not be construed as an argument that the field of adult education is a subset of HRD. It is not. The relationship is more like that depicted in figure 2. HRD and adult education, while both interested in adult learning, are discrete entities. Their area of intersection occurs within the host organization. When adult learning decisions about individuals

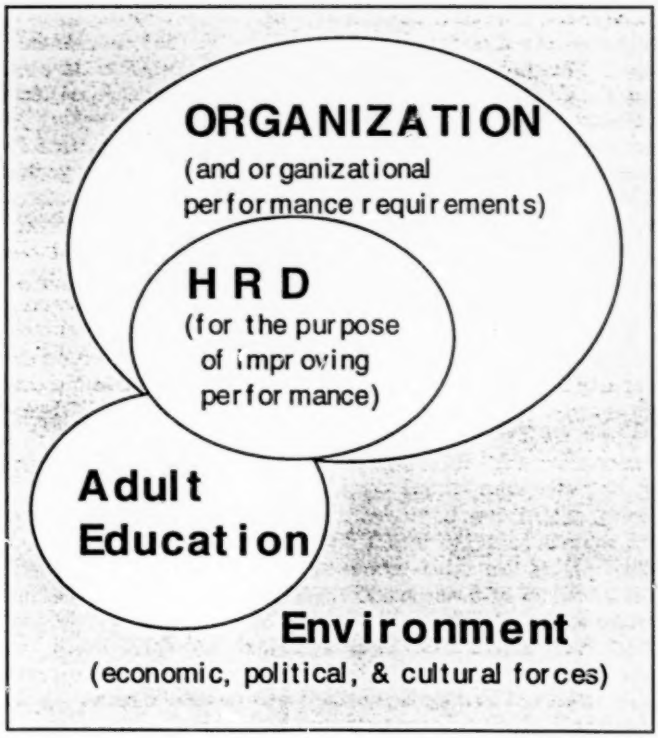

Figure 2. Relationship Between Human Resource Development and Adult Education

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are bounded by rules and requirements of the organization, adult learning becomes HRD. When the adult learning rules and requirements are located in the individual, it is AE. The core test is contained in the idea of locus of control. If the organization retains the authority to approve or disapprove learning interventions, the locus of control is with the organization and therefore it is HRD. To the point that they are overtly shared, they are both.

HRD includes processes and interventions which do not always involve training. By the same token, adult education does not always take place in the context of organizations for the purpose of performance improvement. The outcome or dependent variable of adult education can be personal growth, general knowledge, personal expertise or even entertainment.

The intersection of HRD and adult education results in performance focused educational interventions having the following attributes. First, the context is organizations. Second, the dependent variable or desired outcome is performance which will directly impact the goals of the organization. Last, the intersection includes education and training interventions.

The Reconciliation of HRD an Adult Education

The tenant that the dependent variable of HRD is or should be performance is by no means universally accepted by practitioners or researchers in the field. Often, concern is expressed that the feelings and worth of human beings as individuals are ignored by focusing too much on bottom line results. Additionally, some hold that fostering learning or the capacity to learn is a valuable outcome in and of itself and assume that sponsoring organizations will logically benefit. Thus the line is sometimes drawn between those who view HRD as tied to business goals and focused on the bottom line and those who would like to take a more humanistic stance in the matter. This dichotomy will be termed the "performance versus learning" debate as a matter of convenience (see Swanson, 1995 and Watkins & Marsick, 1995).

This debate, like many others, is fueled by an often misconstrued delineation of the opposing sides. Upon closer examination it is discovered that perhaps the two sides have more in common than first proposed. On the one hand, those who adhere to the performance orientation of HRD do not do so in an attempt to deny the dignity and worth of employees. Neither do they deny that learning is a necessary component of performance. The goal of performance focused HRD is simply to insure that the HRD process within organizations contributes to the goals of the organizational system within which it operates. This does not necessarily imply an authoritarian management style. Some might argue that to ignore performance issues is itself inhumane and inconsiderate of the work force. While organizational performance does not guarantee job security, poor organizational performance puts jobs at serious risk. On the other hand, those on the learning side of the debate are not so naive to think that organizational goals and performance are irrelevant to HRD. Quite to the contrary, they are seen as important, but also important are issues which are difficult to tie to the bottom line of an income statement. Trying to foster a drive to learn within an organization may be a noble goal, but this will be difficult to prove if constrained by the tools of cost-benefit analysis. Upon careful consideration, it appears that HRD and AE theory and practice may not be in conflict.

Still, it is our contention that HRD should exist for the purpose of improving performance, indeed, must be performance focused considering the relationship of HRD to the organizational system it serves. If HRD is to be viewed as a major business process and not just as an optional activity or a waste of resources, then it must be tied to the goals, most of them financial, of the organization. Does this mean that some HRD programs are a priori non-performance based and thus not worthy of development? No, it does not, and this is an important point that requires further elaboration.

Take developing a learning organization, for example (Senge, 1990). Much has been written lately about the learning organization and the benefits that might come from developing such an entity. To simplify matters, a learning organization will be defined as an organization which fosters the ability, desire, and activity of long term learning within the work place. Using the traditional metrics of performance measurement such as cost-benefit analysis, quality, and cycle time, an increasing number of scholars find it difficult to see how an intervention designed to develop a learning organization could concretely be shown to improve performance (Jacobs, 1995). At least it is not as clear cut as a program designed to improve the telephone skills of customer service representatives.

Does this mean that there is no place for the development of a learning organization within performance based HRD? Once again, the answer is no. But the organization must be clear why it is pursuing such a program and what the expected results are. Sadly, organizations and HRD frequently implement ideas and programs without a clear conception of either. This practice is sometimes referred to as "fad driven" HRD. Team building, diversity training, and learning organizations are all concepts which many companies develop programs for without a clear idea of why or to what end. It is this type of practice that performance focused HRD is opposed to. If the purpose of HRD is to improve organizational performance, then it is the obligation of HRD to have analyzed a performance problem in enough detail to determine what the root causes of that problem are and what types of interventions would reasonably be expected to help.

This in no way means that team building, diversity training, and learning organizations do not have a place in performance focused HRD. If an analysis of the organization's goals shows that such programs would be integral in the process of achieving them, then they should be pursued. By the same token, if a performance diagnosis indicates that team building, diversity, or organizational learning might be effective solutions, then they should be pursued. What performance focused HRD does not condone is the blind application of interventions and/or programs based on whims or poorly conceptualized analysis. Unfortunately, many judge this to be the existing state of the profession and an irresponsible state. HRD can be irresponsible in its purpose and processes.

Conclusion

"What is the dependent variable of HRD?" Is it the measurable increase in performance which is the direct result of organization development and/or training, or is it something else, like individual learning or participant satisfaction with an intervention?

We have argued for HRD having the purpose of improving performance. This view is founded on the premise that HRD, when practiced within productive organizations, should strive to contribute directly to the organization's performance goals.

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The Development of the Individual Leads to More Productive Workplaces

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A holistic approach to the development of an individual in the context of a learning organization produces a well-informed, knowledgeable, critical thinking adult who has a sense of fulfillment and inherently makes the decisions that cause an organization to prosper which in turn positively impacts the society.

Workplace learning is in the spotlight as modern organizations seek leverage in organizational performance. Learning is being heralded as the compass for navigating through an environment constantly pressured by unprecedented change, competition, technological advancement, globalization, workforce diversity, reengineering, and downsizing. The recent attention on workplace learning parallels a shift occurring in the sciences. The scientific community is in the early stages of a world view shift from the machine age to the systems age (Ackoff, 1993). The machine or mechanistic world view has been influenced by discoveries in the natural sciences dating back to the seventeenth century (Bohm, 1980; Capra, 1993; Wheatley, 1992). The mechanistic perspective, dominant for over 300 years, views the world as a predictable, reducible, and controllable machine. It deeply influenced the industrial revolution, visible in the design of work from a reductionist perspective where functionalization and simplification of tasks were primary objectives. Mechanistic thinking can also be credited with influencing the remarkable success of the industrial revolution, the creation of both the assembly line and hierarchical, functional management. Yet, today there are newer models that are more appropriate for the challenges of the knowledge and information age. In spite of the availability of contemporary, more apropos models, organizations continue to apply old models to new problems.

The 17th Century logic organizations so faithfully adhere to is being challenged by revolutionary discoveries in the sciences including: quantum theory, field theory, chaos theory, and quantum physics. The new sciences have departed from the mechanistic thinking of the old sciences to a more organic understanding of the word valuing systems, wholes and relationships. "The essence of the new science sees the universe as being an undivided whole" (Nordquist, 1995, p. 2-2). Science has changed. Unfortunately, modern management practice has not.

Capra calls for a "new vision of reality" (1982, p. 16) because the models we have based social systems on are outdated. He suggests that we are caught in a crisis of perception; we are living by ideas that have outlived their usefulness but are blind to see that reality. The new vision of reality respects the world as an interconnected system of relationships that is interdependent. Senge (1993) echoes this sentiment with the observation that, "We are in the midst of a worldwide, fundamental shift in management philosophy and practice" (p. 5). The systems perspective recognizes that seeking organizational control is futile. Instead, systems thinkers aim for prediction based on patterns and behaviors over time, recognize that natural systems are self-organizing and that order evolves from disorderly, chaotic processes, such as learning. Harnessing workplace learning has been suggested as an answer to shifting from the machine age to the systems age mentality. Essentially, making this shift calls for new models of management and workplace development.

New models of organization management and development must shift from mechanistic to systemic approaches. A holistic approach to the development of an individual in the context of a learning organization produces a well-informed, knowledgeable, critical thinking adult who has a sense of fulfillment and inherently makes decisions that cause an organization to prosper which

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in turn positively impacts the society. Further, unless individual development is fostered and supported in organizations, the organizations will fail to prosper over the long term. Of course, organizational environments must also be critiqued for their "conditions of growth" (Dewey, 1916, p. 10). Finally, development must be systemic and holistic if it is to have any lasting impact for either the individual, the organization, or the society.

A new paradigm of individual development is called for in the context of a shifting world view. This essay presents a case for holistic employee development by reviewing the context of learning and development in the workplace today, exploring the present crisis in individual development in organizational life, and presenting a framework for individual development and organizational development.

The Context of Learning and Development in the Workplace

When it comes to workplace management and learning, the machine mentality has been widely applied. Examples include: obsessive growth, rigid management hierarchies, command and control management strategies, production driven decisions, ranking of divisions and employees, rewards for top employees, punishments for low performers, performance heralded as the ultimate goal, internal competition, incentive pay, quotas, short term focus, reactive management, management by objectives, stifling bureaucracy, and assembly lines. Human resource development (HRD) processes have also embraced the machine mentality exemplified by rigid separation of work and life, quick fix management gimmicks, reactive behaviors versus creative long term planning, training unrelated to strategy, training for short-term performance gains, management ownership and control of development, over-reliance on formal training programs, teacher-centered development programs, incremental change, little or no support for personal development or needs assessment, restructuring and "canned" training. Employee development and work have long been treated as mechanical systems. Yet, the work system is a social system and the mechanical model is beginning to falter. Capra observes, "The nature of large corporations is profoundly inhuman. Competition, coercion, and exploitation are essential aspects of their activities, all motivated by the desire for indefinite expansion. . . . Corporations work like machines rather than human institutions once they have grown beyond a certain size" (1982, p. 221).

The HRD trend is toward learning organizations, as popularized by Senge (1990). The challenge of becoming a "learning organization" lies in the ability to truly change organizational structure of development and management from fragmented machine-like bureaucracies, to fluid, connected networks. As with any change, the danger lies with replicating the old ineffective system. The systems perspective poses yet another challenge for HRD: not becoming obsessed with the system at the expense of the individual. Although the system is the focus of such initiatives, obsession with the system may distract organizations from focusing on the fundamental aspect of organizational learning and development: the individual. The pivotal task in shifting to a systems model is putting the individual back in development.

The Crisis in Individual Development

The machine mentality in the workplace coupled with obsessive focus on performance has created a crisis in individual development. Essentially, it has functioned to fragment the person from life. The machine age organization offers most employees, with the exception of managers and professionals, little control over their workplace activities. Jarvis (1992) emphasizes that, "In this organizational and technological world of work individuals learn to become divided selves and to cope with life. . . .Learning how to fit in is a non-reflective learning process"

(Jarvis, 1992, p. 180).

There are few rewards in the workplace of today for admitting, "I don't know," or "I need help," or "I might be wrong." Instead, employees are rewarded for competing against each other, having the right answers and moving quickly in moments of crisis. This reward system leaves employees with little or no time to reflect on the consequences of their decisions or actions. Work is less than fulfilling and employees are meeting personal development needs outside the workplace. Evidence of this detachment can simply be found by reading the newspaper comic strip Dilbert --a comic strip created by Scott Adams that bemoans the dehumanizing, unmotivating, controlling workplace of modern life--to sense that something is amiss in organizational life.

Organizations, in their infatuation with the quick fix, pour money into development when it impacts the bottom line and when times are good. Yet, development that is solely productivity-based misses what it means to be human. There is such an epidemic lack of systems thinking in organizations today that the suggestion of whole-person development will be received by many mechanistic managers as absurd. However, "Earning and living are not two separate departments or operations in life. They are two names for a continuous process looked at from opposite ends. . . . A type of education based on this vision of *continuity* is, obviously, the outstanding need of our times" (Lawrence P. Jacks excerpt from *Journal of Adult Education*, 1929, pp. 7-10 in Knowles, 1990, p. 32).

Productivity-based development may benefit the company, but corporate life has become so immersed in the machine mentality that Capra suggests,

> The concepts of "efficiency," "productivity," and "profit" are used in such a narrow context that they have become quite arbitrary. Corporate efficiency is measured in terms of corporate profits, but with these profits being made increasingly at public cost, we have to ask, "efficient for whom?" When economists talk about efficiency, do they mean efficiency at the individual level, at the level of the corporation, at the social level, or at the level of the ecosystem?" (1982, p. 229).

To divorce the worker from the self is not possible from a systemic perspective, yet workplace development can function to do just that. The essence of developing the whole person is captured by Dewey who insists that:

> Nothing could be more absurd than to try to educate individuals with an eye to only one line of activity. In the first place, each individual has of necessity a variety of callings, in each of which he should be intelligently effective; and in the second place only one occupation loses its meaning and becomes a routine keeping busy at something in the degree in which it is isolated from other interests. No one is just an artist and nothing else, and in so far as one approximates that condition, he is so much the less developed human being; he is a monstrosity. He must at some period in his life, be a member of a family; he must have friends and companions; he must either support himself or be supported by others, and thus he has a business career" (1916, p. 307).

A shift from economic growth to inner growth is desperately needed. David Korten, author of When Corporations Rule the World, in a keynote address at the 1996 Academy of Human Resource Development observed, "The evidence is accumulating that we face a problem that can be resolved only by changing the structures, the rules of the game, of the larger economic and political system within which business operates" (p. 2). People work to serve higher purposes, both tangible and intangible. Thus, systemic workplace development offers a unique opportunity for learning and education that impacts lives, work and communities. In the words of Dewey, "An occupation is a continuous activity having a purpose. Education *through* occupations consequently combines within itself more of the factors conducive to learning than any other method" (p. 308).

Viewing development as valuable only if it contributes to the bottom line productivity is a mechanistic viewpoint that has perpetuated the mechanistic model of the past 300 years. In the systems perspective, it is counter intuitive to only value and focus on performance and productivity as a rationale for learning. New models of individual development are in order that link the whole individual to the organization and society. Although not without risk, the new model holds great promise for individuals and organizations alike.

A Framework for Individual Development

While mechanistic workplaces and development processes are insensitive to adult development across the lifespan, the theory and practice underling adult learning and systems thinking offers alternatives. Holistic individual development for the future is grounded in humanism, systems thinking and adult learning theory. Merriam and Caffarella observe that, "Learning in adulthood is an intensely personal activity" (1991, p. xi). Yet, organizations function to depersonalize, organize, control and often constrain workplace development.

Merriam and Caffarella also estimate that 90 percent of the population is involved with at least one self-directed learning activity a year (1991, p. 54), and Marsick and Watkins (1990) observe that much of the learning in the workplace is either incidental or unintended. What is known about adults as self-directed learners is that they need personal autonomy, they have the willingness and ability to manage their own learning, they need a context that gives them control over their learning, and they meet learning goals without the use of formal institutions or methods (Candy, 1991). In spite of this, much of the development that occurs in the workplace is formal, productivity-based, and fragmented.

The manager who believes that employees are motivated only to serve the corporate interest or who are willing to invest only in development that clearly impacts the bottom line are missing the opportunity to capture the natural energy and enthusiasm that adults bring to their personal learning. They are also likely to be entirely ignoring the reality that their employees *are* engaged in learning that is meaningful to the organization with or without management support. What organizations must recognize is the cost of *not* investing in individual development. Unfulfilled employees are less productive and often leave the organization. The long term cost of replacement is prohibitive to any employer.

What is the bridge that links individual and organizational development? Systemic thinking offers tools and models to build this bridge. Capra believes that, "What we need therefore, is to revise the concept and practice of work in such a way that it becomes meaningful and fulfilling for the individual worker, useful for society, and part of the harmonious order of the ecosystem. To reorganize and practice our work in this way will allow us to recapture its spiritual essence" (Capra, 1982 p. 233).

Employees deserve the space and support to create and articulate personal vision and understand how it connects to the organizational purpose and goals. This demands that the organization create an infrastructure promoting holistic individual development and then connect it on a collective level. This infrastructure supports giving employees the space to reflect and plan safely, and share discourse with other people in the organization about plans and goals.

To suggest that individual development in and of itself is the total answer would violate the very principles of systems thinking. It is the place to start, but once it has been cultivated, it must be integrated into the organization if it is to benefit learning of other employees and the productivity of the organization. Mumford (1996) suggests a pyramid of learning that begins with individual learning at its base followed by one-on-one learning, progressing to group or

team learning, and culminating in organizational learning. The hierarchy suggests that organizational learning cannot happen without the preceding levels of learning. The critical understanding lies in the linkage between individual and organizational learning and ways of synthesizing the two. The systems model of development demands an infrastructure that promotes individual growth, commits to cultural change, and strategically links individual and organizational growth.

Promoting Individual Growth Organizations are made up of people. Holistic development integrates personal and professional life in career planning, development and assessment. Holistic development is not necessarily linked to the present or future job tasks, but the overall growth of the individual with the recognition that this growth will have an impact on the organizational system. Dewey asks, "How can there be a society really worth serving unless it is constituted of individuals of significant personal qualities?" (121).

Merriam and Caffarella (1991) conclude that adults engage in learning for the sake of learning, and holistic development essentially involves giving adults the space and support to learn. The ultimate challenge in organizations is to harness adult learners' propensity to be self-directed learners and not create barriers that prevent or discourage it. Senge (1990), refers to the process of individual development as "personal mastery' or "the discipline of personal growth and learning" (p. 141). Personal mastery is the art of defining current reality accurately while concurrently holding an image of a vision that is desired. Senge suggests that the higher the level of personal mastery, the higher the level of commitment, responsibility, and motivation to the organization. Customized, personalized employee development is a dramatic shift from the bottom-line production based focus of the Mechanistic Age. Making the shift not only requires an ardent commitment to individual development, but also a shift in the culture of the organization.

Culture An organization is made up of people who have relationships and share values. The culture of an organization deeply affects the day-to-day functioning of the organization. To shift into the systems perspective, the traditional culture must be challenged, a shared vision for systemic development must be cultivated, and a commitment to long term change must be made.

Workplace development has followed the machine age mentality. Yet, change is in the air. Block reflects, "I think the field of workplace learning and performance is going to return to the person and the individual and to building community and participation. . . .Learning and performing will become one and the same thing" (in Training & Development, 1994, p. 38). Dodgson (1993) argues that, "individuals are the primary learning entity in firms, and it is individuals which create organizational forms that enables learning in ways which facilitate organizational transformation" (pp. 377-378). Senge argues that taking a stand for full employee development is a radical departure from the traditional contract between employee and institution, and in fact, it might be the most radical departure in a learning organization.

Individual development and performance are not either-or-options in organizations today. Performance will improve with individual development actions, but the culture must also support it. Senge notes that, "Ironically, by focusing on performing for someone else's approval, corporations create the very conditions that predestine them to mediocre performance. Over the long run, superior performance depends on superior learning" (1990, p. 7). To achieve renewed focus on individual development and foster a culture change, organizations must design infrastructure to support the learning/systems world view.

Infrastructure An organization is made up of people who are bound by a shared structure and context. Fritz (1989) argues that structure determines behavior and that true change evolves only from creating new structures that are more supportive of the desired outcome. Learning occurs all the time. The task is to harness, capture and ensure effective learning is happening. Watkins and Marsick observe that, "transformation will not come if

learning functions as a parallel system, as the training system function does now" (p. 20). Because structure determines behavior (Fritz, 1989) the present mechanistic structures have not supported whole individual development. Osterberg notes that, "In the old way of thinking, companies exist primarily to make profit. In the new way of thinking, companies exist primarily as structures within which people come together to create cooperatively" (1993, p. 69). Osterberg also notes that the hierarchical structure is a serious obstacle to personal development because it is built on fear and mistrust. The current process of goal setting is debilitating as well because it prevents personal development by removing the chance to take divergent routs to achieving organization vision.

Organizations should also develop models of learning that allow them to practice and document their learning processes. A systems perspective to recognize how jobs relate to each other and the overall performance of the firm is also a necessary ideology. Firms must recognize that only through relationships does anything get done and to cultivate strong relationships throughout the organization is a key performance strategy. A company is not a machine but a living organism. Thus, living policies will be much more effective in cultivating an environment supporting holistic development. The task for human resource developers is to help organizations understand the systemic long-term benefit of creating structures to support individual development.

What happens when organizations focus on holistic personal development? The Electrical & Fuel Handling Division of Ford Motor Company is in the process of becoming a learning organization. Throughout EFHD's process a key emphasis has been on individual development. Case study research on the implementation has yielded several themes related to the impact of personal development from the employee perspective (Bierema and Berdish, 1996). Focusing on individual development while becoming a learning organization also has its rewards on an organizational level. When the division's top executive, Bob Womac, is asked to justify EFHD's remarkable turn around he humbly replies, "it is because we committed to becoming a learning organization."

Conclusions

The process of linking learning to performance needs extensive inquiry. Assessing the link between learning and performance is difficult. Nadler and Nadler (1992) Note that "learning brings about the *possibility* of a change in performance" (p. 84), and Crossan, Lane, White and Djurfeldt (1995) conclude that, "there is no evidence to suggest that learning is synonymous with improved performance. . . . Conversely, good performance is not necessarily a sign that learning has occurred" (P. 353). In a landmark organizational learning study in 1965, Cangelosi and Dill concluded that more research was needed, particularly that focused on the interaction of individual and organizational learning and its context. Crossan, Lane, White and Djurfeldt (1995) suggest that this challenge still has not been met. Most every adult works and understanding the learning in this context is of fundamental importance to adult educators. Convincing organizations to support systems wide strategy is difficult.

Adult educators and human resource development professionals are uniquely equipped to research, design and implement new models of workplace development with the individual and learning as top priorities. Clearly, the challenge for adult development in the workplace calls for new models. Bergevin (1967) captures the spirit of whole person learning in the following comments:

> Adult education must, then have a purpose greater than that of learning the skills of the craftsman and the physician and the entrepreneur, important as those are. If we are truly engaged in the maturity process, we do not live to work and make money, or have a

physician keep us alive merely to be alive. We learn what to do with our lives, how to use our money and our good health to enrich our lives. We use these resources, money and education and health, to help us live. A significant task of adult education is to teach us how to live a full, productive life in which the ability to make a living and stay well is important, but equally important is the knowledge of what to do culturally and spiritually with our lives and talents" (p. 41)

A holistic approach to the development of an individual in the context of a learning organization produces a well-informed, knowledgeable, critical thinking adult who has a sense of fulfillment and inherently makes the decisions that causes an organization to prosper which in turn positively impacts the society. The systems age demands fostering and supporting individual development in the workplace for the long term. Such development holds significant promise for having lasting impact on individual, organization, and societal levels.

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HRD As Evolutionary System: From Pyramid-Building to Space-Walking and Beyond

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Human resource development is modeled as an evolutionary system with an incumbent professional identity. Accepting this model changes the rules for professional practice, field description, and field theory development.

Search in a wide sweep for new and enhancing ways to think about human resource development is likely to be a hallmark of millennial HRD practice and professional preparation. It is not that HRD is frail or depends on this kind of professional soul-searching for its life support, but rather that HRD is growing so fast and in such interesting variety that it draws attention like a magnet. There are volumes still to be learned about the HRD person (the HRD self), about HRD work and its effects, and about HRD as a field. Perhaps this quest for deeper understanding signifies a coming of age, an insistent recognition of HRD as the full-grown, lusty, complex system that it is.

Almost certainly, HRD will not revert to its earlier powerlessness and will not be treated as an organization stepchild as it has been in the past (Baird, Schneier, and Laird, 1983). HRD search and discovery is now being internalized as reflection on personal experience and hope for the future. Externalized, the search gradually crystallizes in the form of a detailed intellectual and performance history of HRD. Fortunately, as often as it looks backward in time or clicks on the present, the search moves forward to what will be. In retrospect, the contributions of many perspectives from multiple root-disciplines are instructive, spelling out the life work of valued theory-builders and practitioners (Underwood, 1991). But as the future looms, urgency is heightened to acknowledge HRD as a confluence, an intermingling of disciplines that produces something ***new***.

HRD as Confluence

The confluence of disciplines in HRD appears to have reached flood stage, spreading over the globe and into space as astronauts from worlds apart fly off to learn from each other. What the future of HRD becomes may have everything to do with what practitioners and academics currently think it is, and further, whether they will acknowledge a sense of belonging to it. Collective action on behalf of HRD as a field, and HRD status as a discipline, depend on such perceptions and commitments.

The HRD milieu is richer now than ever before with the nutrients for human learning. This may be an effect of a primary though often misunderstood principle of General System Theory: that the whole is ***greater than*** the sum of its parts. Most people relate this principle to the idea of synergy, and that is where it drops. What may be a more important aspect of the principle is that a confluence of systems produces something ***other than*** the sum of its parts. Another point often missed is that "greater" means added elements plus changed configurations. It does not imply "better" unless all new elements are systemically integrated, contributing to efficacy of the whole.

A confluence analogy is useful for showing the "other than" nature of whole systems. Even though the Missouri River, the Ohio River, and other tributaries are watershed systems in their own right, downstream they are part of a mighty confluence. The larger whole, the Mississippi River system, began in many places including its own river source, and it is more than the sum of its tributaries. It is also distinctly different from any of them, and different from what it once was. Metaphorically, HRD is like the Mississippi, downstream from its origins and its contributing disciplines. It is a whole new "river."

To attempt a topological map or even a simple listing of root disciplines is hazardous, for HRD theorists and practitioners will dip from whatever disciplinary sources they need at any given time.

Nevertheless, there is considerable agreement that adult education, instructional design and performance technology, psychology, business and economics, sociology, cultural anthropology, organization theory and communication, philosophy, axiology (study of values), and human relations theories, principles, and practices have all become a visible part of the HRD milieu. On the river map, these are very large streams in their own right. Even this should not be considered an exhaustive list of tributary disciplines.

The difficulty for those in HRD who maintain strong identifications with their root disciplines is that, while they can travel overland or chug upstream to their roots, they are forever changed by their trip downstream. The HRD river experience does not wash off. Fortunately a systems thinker can acknowledge belonging to the HRD profession without chopping off sustaining roots. Every HRD practitioner or professor has honorable lineage from somewhere else. Clinging excessively to lineages, however, may do violence to what HRD has become: a new system of thought and practice that has its own identity and professional incumbency.

The upshot is that pulling HRD apart and trying to restore elements of it to various disciplines--for example, by implying that it can be factored into organization development, career development, training and development, or other elements--is like saying that the waters of the Missouri, the Ohio, and other tributaries can be separated and made distinguishable after they enter the Mississippi. Historical reviews of the root disciplines and of HRD system growth are finally beginning to show how much exchange there has been and how little any one discipline can claim to have originated or to hold the high ground of HRD.

Take the case of performance technology. From its birth as an instructional development strategy to deliver better training, it has grown to encompass organizational analysis and consulting dimensions. It may not even lead to training, but to something else that helps human and technical systems work better. Enlarging also, career development has become the task of every employee and every manager-coach. Organization development has become deeply embedded in productivity issues without losing its interest in the learning power of group experiences. Adult education has both feet in HRD practice, although reflexively it seeks knowledge about how people learn. Vocational education still leans to the technical training side, but has recently begun to correct toward more comprehensive pre-work education.

A thorough analysis of the root disciplines above--and many others that have made HRD so richly multi-disciplinary--might find marked differences in underlying assumptions about people and how they work. Symptoms of different paradigms (world views) are certainly present in these strands. The point is, however, that not only practice but also theory-making about practice, seem to be flowing together at a faster rate than ever before.

So it seems that HRD-as-confluence, as a coming together of disciplines, has already happened. What remains is not only for practitioners and academics to acknowledge this but also to recognize HRD as a powerful, boundary-flexing, evolutionary system. It will not only change in the future as it has in the past, but quite likely at an even faster rate. What it must respond to is a startling deficit: a learning rate in organizations running far below the rate of need for learning (Revans, 1982).

As it evolves, HRD may need a new name to represent itself more accurately and to escape from limiting images. Names are powerful, and one denoting systemic organizational learning (SOL) might do more to acknowledge the widening band of constituencies and also emphasize the quantum leaps required to accomplish learning at the rate of change (LRC). But name-change is speculative. Less controversial is the need for widening the HRD angle of vision to acquire a more panoramic view of what people in 21st Century organizations will need. The learning required for pyramid building has never been fully explained and still elicits awe. How much more mysterious, and how daunting, are the learning tasks of the future!

Systematic Plus Systemic Thinking and HRD

Because this model encourages study of ***HRD as an evolutionary system*** with built-in professional identity, a thumbnail sketch of systems thinking may help. Terms from General Systems Theory have crept into every kind of science and social science literature over the past three decades. Some of the original meanings seem to have been lost along the way, leaving misconceptions.

Banathy's systems education classification (1972) specifies four levels of systems analysis and language. Most "systems talk" in HRD appears to be at technician or technologist levels, not at levels of field theory or theory about general systems. Often when a so-called "systems approach" is applied, it turns out to be largely ***systematic,*** as in instructional systems design (ISD) or much of performance technology. These are tool-using, tool-making activities that proceed in relatively linear though often highly creative fashion. The branching sophistication of contemporary multi-media and the Internet tells the power of technician-technologist levels of systems thinking. Even so, this sophistication appears to be more systematic than systemic. Illustrative definitions of systematic are "methodical in procedure or plan, marked by thoroughness and regularity, [and] of, relating to, or concerned with classification, specifically taxonomic" (Webster's 9th Collegiate Dictionary).

Systemic thinking, used to develop field theories and explain systems of relations in HRD, is much rarer. Again by Webster's definitions, systemic means "of, relating to, or common to a system; specifically, affecting the body generally." This comes much closer to what Bertalanffy had in mind when he first described the common properties of systems in organic terms (1968).

Recognizing that field theory in HRD is itself undernourished as the 20th Century draws to a close, there is already the challenge of addressing the general system level of theory development previously bypassed. New HRD literature relevant to this effort could include such matters as explaining and changing organizational thinking and action in terms of systems complexity, chaos, or creativity. Climbing up Banathy's ladder of systems thinking from immediate actions to systemic knowledge about HRD takes its advocates steps beyond trench-work "how-to" toward questioning what and why. As the field of HRD matures, this would seem to be where it ought to head to help people in organizations learn at the rate of change.

Evolutionary Systems Thinking and HRD

Six years ago, Peter Senge thoughtfully reminded everyone that "systems thinking" is a core discipline (1990). But systems thinking is anything but new; it is evolutionary and at least as old as tool making. It draws heavily on intuitive, personally constituted modes of knowing and deliberately merges science and art. Somehow, people learned together how to build all kinds of impressive systems, from pyramids to astronomical calendars. In the Middle Ages, scholars conceived and modeled systems elements and workings of the entire universe. Such complexes of meaning, part fact and part belief, infuse all knowledge.

Scientific respectability for systems thinking arrived with the formation of the Society for General Systems Research in 1954. Bertalanffy's general theory about systems and subsequent elaborations were inspired efforts, for out of them grew unprecedented cross-fertilization of ideas and the beginning of a knowledge revolution that is still in progress. General Systems Theory (GST) provides researchers and practitioners with a metalanguage and metaconceptual framework for studying whole systems, irreducible to component parts.

Flood (1990) has argued that systems science engenders three complementary methodological positions: positivistic, interpretivistic, and critical or ideologically based inquiry. All three points of view are visible in journals like ***Systems Practice, Systems Research,*** and ***Complexity.*** Philosophically, these are all subsumed by evolutionary systems theory, which examines small to large systems like ecology, growth limits, and bifurcations that represent choices between the kind of world systems humans can consciously create and the kind of world that will arrive by default if nothing is done (Laszlo, 1991). At its best, HRD may bridge the gulf between what is (roads now taken) and what might be: the world acting as a system evolving simultaneously toward ***progressive integration and differentiation,*** with working together becoming the norm yet each person accorded individuality and value in diversity. Variety is required for healthy systems.

They evolve and become something wholly new, or they disappear and in so doing, release energy and resources for other, more viable systems. This is not only the essence of evolutionary systems thinking but also of paradigm changing, for old paradigms tend to hide new ways of seeing and creating (Kuhn, 1970; Wheatley, 1992).

Pyramid-Building: HRD Beyond Disciplines, Roles, and Outputs

Reframing ideas about HRD has often taken the form of modeling. Despite the trend toward more complex and systemic definitions of the field, a mind-set remains that HRD is part of, though peripheral to, human resource management (HRM). A model slightly removed from this is McLagan's Human Resource Wheel (1989a) showing HRD outside human resource management, divided in three parts, and doing collaborative work with HRM. While the wrap-around idea of HRD is preferable to versions that show HRD as marginalized by organization maintenance tasks of HRM, the Wheel is still bound up in issues of the status quo (Watkins and Willis, 1991). With slight variations, other authors have followed McLagan's lead. For example, Pace, Smith, and Mills (1991) have suggested analytical, developmental, instrumental, and mediational roles for HRD, but also kept 11 subroles from the McLagan model.. She has herself suggested need for matching systems theory to future HRD issues (1989b).

Some recent HRD books (for example, Swanson (1994; Brinkerhoff and Gill (1994) are thoughtfully framed in systems language. Still, because they are technician-technology oriented, they are more systematic and taxonomic than systemic, as previously defined. They do not lead directly to construction of field theory in HRD or general theories about HRD as an open system. Chalofsky and Lincoln had earlier found five major perspectives on HRD: conceptual/philosophical, operational, functional, field of study, and field of practice (1988). The literature of HRD practice is understandably focused on the operational perspective --that is, on what is currently being done-- but this may be doing practitioners a disservice in the long run. The conceptual/philosophical view seems least represented in current writing, and yet it is the "growth stock" of the future.

Several practitioner/theorists do make this kind of "investment." Watkins, for example, has modeled HRD as a collection of metaphors, rather than a collection of disciplines, and has asked for the hearing of "many voices" in the debates over what HRD is or may yet be (1989, 1991). Watkins and Marsick (1993) offer an extended model for action in the learning organization. It is worth watching for other articles and books that make heavy use of conceptual modeling; they bode well for ongoing development of field theory. If the motif of learning is the heart of HRD and of organizational change, then it needs to be displayed as such in newer models and the contributions of adult education theory need to be made more explicit.

Space-Walking: HRD as a System for the Future

An attempt to conceptualize HRD as itself a system began during the design of a university core curriculum in human resource development (Willis, 1989). Resisting the existing systematic, taxonomic patterns in that turning-point year meant that, while wading in a sea of competencies produced by 11 different studies in the U.S. and Canada, a gestalt switch and paradigm shift was necessary. To describe HRD as an integrated system with interacting elements and a whole new life of its own seemed a good way to move beyond technician-technology levels of system thinking.

The first requirement for redefining a system is to rethink system boundaries. In this case, a circle of HRD is scribed wholly apart from HRM. Such a step is supported by historical precedents, systems science itself, and practitioner experience confirming that HRD and HRM belong to different "paradigmatic continents," borrowing Flood's term for widely differing points of view. Willis and May (1996) contend that HRD is spinning off from HRM just as management information systems (MIS) were earlier spun off from finance departments. In each case, the subsidiary has become too important to be left for last. Internal system relations of HRD are no more contingent upon HRM than they are on any other part of the organization. Organization information functions have not been subordinated to HRM, and there appears to be no compelling reason why organization learning functions should be.

Three representational drawings (Figures 1, 2 and 3) have been made to aid in understanding HRD as a system with dynamic, evolutionary properties and capabilities. Figure 1 sketches HRD in a broadly systemic configuration, with business, education, other types of organizations, and applied sciences acting as paradigmatic continents but also connected through various mediums of exchange. Working at leading edges, HRD-as-system toils on the mine-face of education, digging for organization learning and borrowing liberally from the applied sciences. HRM toils on the mine-face of business,

Figure 1: Four Paradigmatic Continents and Their Encounters

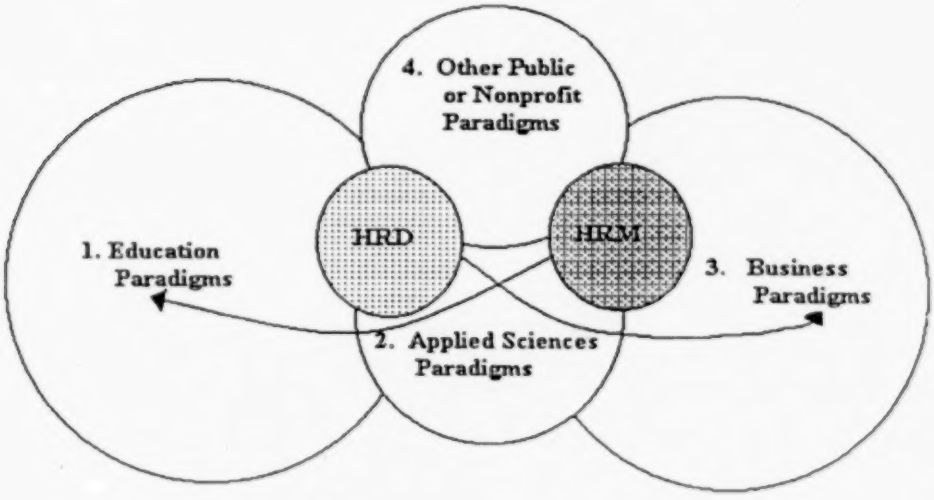
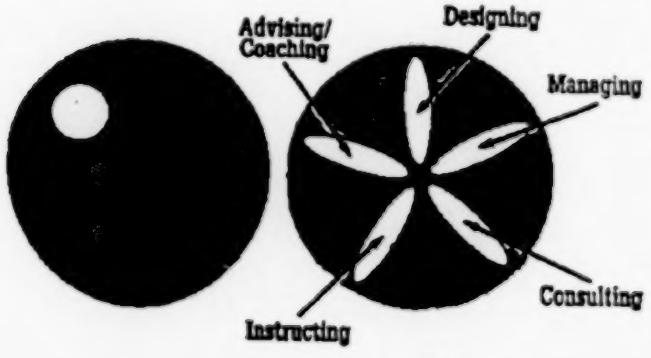


Figure 2: HRD as System with Arenas for Action



HRD (THE Whole)

HRD (Cross-Section)

Figure 3: A "File Cabinet" for HRD

HRD ARENAS FOR ACTION

FOUNDATIONS	INSTRUCTING: DELIVERY	ADVISING/ COACHING	DESIGNING	MANAGING/ LEADING	CONSULTING (PEER)
SYSTEMS & STRUCTURES - General Systems - Psych-social systems - Management systems - HRD Systems - Systems, Allied Fields MODELS & PARADIGMS HRD GENERAL & FIELD - Assumptions - Theories - Definitions - Ideologies HRD TRAITS, SKILLS & CERTIFICATION HRM/HRD DISTINCTIONS NEW TECHNOLOGY - Automation - Software GLOBALIZATION PRODUCTIVITY; QUALITY WORK/SOCIETY	LESSON PLANNING; ORGANIZING "STAND-UP" STRATEGIES' - Teaching/Learning Styles & Modes - Methods, Techniques & Settings - Learner involvement & internalization BRAIN/MIND STRATEGIES - Accelerated Learning - Imaging, metaphor - Cognitive process COMPUTER DELIVERIES - CBT, CAI, etc. - Videodisc, video - Learning Systems - Tutorials - Automated processes EVALUATION STRATEGIES APPLICATIONS, FOLLOW-UP VARIETIES OF TRAINING - Sales - Customer service - Technical - Supervisory - Management - Etc.	EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT - Career Access & Development - Mentoring - Mobility - Asset-Based Manpower Planning and Use - Outplacement WORKPLACE ISSUES - Political, social, economic climate - Interpersonal effectiveness - Ethnic, gender diversity - Equity - Autonomy; power - Literacy - Parental leave - Child care - Health care & fitness - Access to T & D - Access to EAP - Layoff, termination - Violence - Work rules	PERFORMANCE TECHNOLOGY - ISD; Other Models - Front-End Analysis - Template-making for Analysis, Design, Implementation, Evaluation of all Varieties of Training and Development MEDIATED TEACHING/ LEARNING STRATEGIES, TOOLS - Hypermedia - Hypertext - AI - Other computer - Other media SOCIOTECHNICAL SYSTEMS - Productivity & quality systems - Communication & reporting systems - Accountability systems - Employee involvement and participation	GENERAL MODELS & PHILOSOPHIES MANAGEMENT CAREER PATHS HRD CAREERS HRD MANAGEMENT - Reporting Relations - Central/decentralizing - Admin. systems - T & D Systems - Strategic vision - Planning; proposals - Executive presentation; other communication - Marketing - Staffing, supervision - Performance monitoring - Contracting, brokering services HRD FINANCE - Budget - Cost/benefit analysis - Profitability - Corporate accounting - Financial reports - Forecasting HRD IMAGE - Internal - External	ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT; CHANGE ORIENTATIONS & PHILOSOPHIES - IT/ID - OD - T & D - CD - MBO - Corporate Culture - Ergonomics, etc. EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES & STRUCTURES - Participative mgt. - Reticular work groups - Flat & hierarchical - Sociotechnical strategies & accommodations - Other power shifts TRANSFER OF CHANGE AGENTRY SKILLS TO ORGANIZATION RESEARCH & WRITING PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

dedicated to efficiency and also borrowing heavily from the applied sciences. Both are at the beck and call of business and education, and of other public, nonprofit, and community enterprises. Migration to other continents is indicated, but the attachment of HRD and HRM to their source continents should be obvious. Neither could adequately do the work required of them without these attachments.

Though not shown specifically in Figure 1, adult education (AE) also forms a spin-off that is too important to be left for last. Once it was thought to be a slight and even capricious variation on mainstream teaching/learning theory and practice. Adult learners themselves -- in great numbers -- have decided otherwise. In a world where the rate of learning falls far behind the rate of change, adult education theory and practice has emerged as a necessity. It offers a rich vein of ore for understanding and practicing HRD. Research that reveals adult learners as meaning-seekers and self-transformers also shows that learning in organizations goes far beyond task behavior change.

When professionals move from adult education academic programs into practice in organizations, they join the "Mississippi" of HRD, even though they do so in a way that fits their own world view most closely. This is not different from what happens to other HRD practitioners who draw strength from other root disciplines. Each stream makes its own contribution and forms its own relations in the HRD system. AE migrates, while still attached to its source continent. Certainly those who have had the river experience of HRD do not return unchanged. Their urgent and practical interest in action learning and creating learning organizations seems a case in point.

The second requirement for understanding HRD as a system is to see that it looks and operates like a system. An initial model (Figure 2) was presented to HRD professors nationally in 1990, proposing that if HRD is conceived as a whole system (symbolized by a three-dimensional sphere) and if it is cut in cross-section across any diameter, five things (elements of action) are occurring at any given time. These are instructing, advising/coaching, designing, managing, and consulting. Each element is distinguished conceptually, although together they are visualized and performed holistically. This overrides the troublesome problems of role and discipline differentiation, for everyone in HRD is always doing all of these things, at some level of expertise, whatever form each action takes. Thus over-specialization or "one-note" career preparation can be placed in perspective with a whole called HRD.

What this model enables is a systemic rather than compartmentalized description of what actually happens in HRD. Leaving any element out, or over-accentuating any, may mean handicapping the performance of other elements. Whatever qualified HRD professionals are not doing -- or not attending to -- there is always a possibility that unqualified others are attempting to do. It follows naturally that HRD practitioners should be insightful generalists, even though root disciplines or career preferences may make them more competent in some elements of the model than in others. It is in and around this general system of responsibilities that HRD curriculum emerges without violating any of the prior taxonomies. This picture has been helpful to those entering the field from earlier disciplines, acting as proof to them that they can transfer root concepts, skills, and values to the HRD profession.

Figure 3 is not what it seems; it only masquerades as a matrix. It is actually an open file cabinet that may be missing any number of fat, relevant files. For example, the whole category called Action Learning has sprung up since last filing. Another set of files is piling up in international HRD.

The aim of this symbolic cabinet is not to be encyclopedic but to illustrate how an HRD practitioner works with information when engaged in any of the five system action sets or when researching foundation literatures. Lines drawn for visual clarity do not represent real boundaries. Cross-overs happen routinely, for any action may involve some or all other actions.

HRD, like Figure 3, is not a finished, closed system; it is evolving and open to further description. It needs to become much more self-aware if it is to have greater impact. HRD needs feet planted firmly on the ground--in order to break out in space and cyberspace. It is an incredible achievement to have come so far and done so much for people in organizations, even after discounting for failures. Chances are that it persists and has shown itself as such a complex system, simply because it accredits the unslakable human thirst for life-long learning.

HRD travels by means of combined scientific, humanistic, and metaphysical motions to known and unknown destinations leagues apart in imagination and miles apart in fact. It has a very long operational history, a very short conceptual history, and an evolutionary system repertoire still to develop in response to a bifurcating, hard-choice age. That organizations are desperate for what mature HRD has to offer is plain; at its best even its detractors know it is more than a string of fads. It is launched toward a future for people who work, learn, and care for each other in a seamless way.

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To Earn or to Learn? The Meaning of Workplace Learning in HRD

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Much of the practice of HRD is grounded in a market model of the workplace. Reliance on this model leads to an emphasis on performance and"value added" approaches, and largely ignores the developmental and educative orientations reflected in recent perspectives in organizational transformation and the field of adult education. Rather than relying solely on a market model, I argue in this article for the "educative workplace" and the democratic ideal, as a conceptual context in which to frame and guide HRD practice within the new and emerging workplaces.

While having dinner recently in a hotel restaurant, I noticed two younger women servers and the middle-aged receptionist vigorously working to keep up with the 25 - 30 customers present. The two servers seemed constantly busy and rushed much of the time, as if they were short-handed. Interactions with customers were courteous but brief and businesslike and they took little time for informal talk or idle chatter. Their behaviors were smooth and efficient but quite task-oriented, focusing largely on the tasks of taking and distributing orders for dinner, and clearing away used dishes. The receptionist often helped them serve orders as they became ready. I wondered how they felt about their work and the workplace, and the opportunities for learning that it provided. Thanking my server and the receptionist, I left the restaurant, thinking similar questions of the bartender, the woman runnng the hotel's gift shop, and the two clerks behind the reception desk. What does the idea of workplace learning mean to them, if it means anything at all? Do they learn from their work or are they merely working to earn a livelihood?

The setting described in this brief vignette provides a concrete context in which to consider the meaning of workplace learning and how it relates to adult education as a field of practice. Should workplace learning, as Gilley and Eggland argue (1989), be framed as an issue of "human resource development" (HRD), in which learning is viewed as a technical, highly job-focused activity and the corporate "bottom-line" is the ultimate consideration? Or, as Michael Welton (1991) has suggested, should workplace learning be framed within the rich tradition of adult education that is committed to individual development as well as social justice and empowerment of people (Collins, 1991)? Should workplace learning be fundamentally job-centered or person-centered? Given the workplace described above and countless others similar to it, it would seem easy to dismiss ideas of individual and social empowerment as abstract ideals with little relevance to the modern workplace. I will argue, however, that this "abstract ideal" provides a moral and political framework for workplace learning more consistent with recent research on work and its organization than the prevailing assumptions aboutworklife derived from the economically-driven view of HRD.

The Strange Space of Workplace Learning in HRD and Adult Education

Work-related education and training occupies a curious intellectual space in the broader landscape of adult learning. According to a recent report, 33% of employed adults within the United States receive some form of job-related training (U.S.D.E., 1994), and work-related goals are the most common reason given for adults participating in some form of education (Courtney, 1992; Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). Yet, as educators of adults, we don't know quite what to make of this form of learning. The practice of Human Resource Development (HRD) is a case in point. Adult educators

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themselves disagree as to whether HRD should be considered a part of their field. Seeing themselves as upholding the vision of the field of adult education articulated many years ago by Eduard Lindeman (1926/1961), some decry the encroachment of avocationalism" on a field traditionally committed to social justice and the empowerment of people (Hart, 1992; Collins, 1991; Cunningham, 1993). Others tend to view HRD as a legitimate area of practice within the broader field of adult education (Brookfield, 1986; Watkins, 1989). Although HRD specialists generally regard their field as ultimately committed to the corporate "bottom line," they, too, disagree as to whether their practice is best understood as a form of adult education. Some see it as virtually interchangeable with adult education (Nadler, 1984), while others argue that it represents a field of practice distinct in many ways from adult education (Gilley & Eggland, 1989; also Willis, this volume).

The economic aims and purposes of HRD have been used by HRD specialists as well as critical adult educators to distinguish the field from the practice of adult education. HRD continues to be influenced by an ideology of scientific management and reflects a view of education where the power and control over what is learned, how, and why is located within the organizational leadership, corporate structure, and HRD staff, a view of education clearly illustrated in the opening vignette. In many respects, this inservice program is typical of many kinds of workplace education and training programs. Humanistically-minded reform efforts have done little to fundamentally alter the ways work and the workplace is conceptualized. Recent writings, however, in work and organizational life emphasize the developmental function of work and the participatory and democratizing trends within the workplace, both of which are challenging the fundamentally economic and job-centered framework within which much of the practice of HRD is cast. The democratic and social justice traditions of adult education provide HRD with a conceptual framework for guiding its practice within these "new" workplaces.

"It's the Economy, Stupid": The Market Model and HRD

The traditional hallmark of an HRD program is its relationship to the sponsoring organization, a relationship usually defined in economic terms as contributing to the "bottom line." This orientation is not surprising, given the pervasiveness of the market model in the way we think about society and our lives. In a jacket-cover endorsement of a popular book on supply side economics (Wanniski, 1989), former President Ronald Reagan wrote, "Economic truth is a lever that can move governments, move history...the economic model that we've created truly has become... 'The Way the World Works.'" When responding to a question about his salary, former Chrysler executive Lee Iacocca, remarked, "that's the American way. If little kids don't aspire to make money like I did, what the hell good is this country?" (DeYoung, 1989, quoted in Kincheloe, 1995, p. 121). Workers in the 1992 Democratic Presidential race were reminded of the key issue in the campaign with a centrally located motto, "It's the economy, stupid."

While one goal of adult education is to strengthen the forces of democracy within society, HRD is often conceptualized and justified within a market economy model, reflected in the various assumptions embedded in its practice. The market model is grounded in a view of humans as *homo econimocus*, "a human who is primarily an instrument for economic aims" (Kincheloe, 1995, p. 5). Individuals work to live - to consume - and the meaning of work rests with its capacity to provide workers with this consumptive power. The job is viewed as being comprised of distinct, specifiable skills and competencies which are empirically demonstrable, and separate from the individual who performs them. Effective performance is determined by measuring the "value added" to corporate "bottom line." The conditions of the workplace and the kind of work individuals are asked to do are considered only if they influence the efficiency with which an individual worker acquires the knowledge and skills necessary to perform the job.

Evolving from the scientific management movement (Taylor, 1911), practitioners of workplace learning programs have adopted a language of technical-rationality for framing their work and "scientific" strategies for planning learning experiences and assessing their effectiveness. Learning within this context is intended to contribute, through improved performance, to this "bottom line" and, ultimately, to our society's global competitiveness. In the traditional view of HRD, practitioners focus on designing and implementing programs that transmit to passive workers the

knowledge and skills "needed" to improve the company's overall performance and, ultimately, society's economic competitiveness. In this market-driven view of education, "learning" itself is defined in particular kinds of ways, largely by the perceived needs of the sponsoring corporation and the work individuals are required to perform.

As a result of this job-centered, bottom-line orientation, value is placed on certain forms of learning, while other kinds of learning are marginalized. For example, a welder participating in a 20 hour workplace literacy program, targeted to improve his job-related reading skills, remarked during a break in instruction that he really wasn't learning anything from the program and that "if they taught me how to read, now that would be something." He wanted to be able to read stories to his grandchildren and this program was not helping him accomplish that goal. With such an emphasis on predefined, formal learning, nonformal and incidental learning goes largely unnoticed. When asked what they have learned from their work, workers often refer to such lessons as the power structures within the workplace; what a person *really* needs to do to get ahead - who to please and who can be ignored; and the minimum amount of work they need to do not to get fired. While HRD practitioners work hard to effectively package knowledge in predefined behaviors and skills, workers are busy constructing their own meaning of work. They learn to see their workplaces as authoritarian, mind-numbing, fragmented, repetitious, monotonous, dreary, and often unsafe (Kincheloe, 1995; Terkel, 1974).

Workplace learning programs and other workplace initiatives grounded in the scientific, technical-rationality of the market economy model have done little to either address these lingering problems or to improve the overall performance of companies. As in the case of the welder discussed earlier, some of these programs actually seem to contribute to the overall sense of alienation and powerlessness workers feel in their jobs. Furthermore, the idea that education for economic competitiveness enhances social stability remains largely speculative. Emphasis on the need to compete in a "global economy" has resulted in severe damage and destruction to local communities, so-called "third-world" nations, and ecosystems. "Reformist" approaches which aim to build up the worker through various motivational strategies, while leaving the basic assumptions of work and its structure intact, have done little to address the disturbing negative fallout of the market model on the individual, society, or the environment.

HRD specialists and critical adult educators point to this market-based approach as a major reason why HRD should be considered apart from adult education. This position, however, is untenable not only for the ethical issues involved, but because it does not adequately conceptualize the emerging view of work described in the literature and increasingly acted upon by companies. This perspective is consistent with the individual and social justice tradition of adult education, a tradition based on the idea that economic well-being *follows from* rather than *produces* a strong and vibrant democracy (Kincheloe, 1995).

Work as Developmental and Empowering

Like many other aspects of our socio-cultural climate within society, we are witnessing contradictory impulses around the issues of paid work. More progressive, person-centered, participatory, and self-authorizing views of work are evolving along side disturbing trends of employment instability and downsizing, increased work hours, deterioration of social relations of work, and a cheapening and devaluing of human labor. These contradictory trends underscore the political and contested nature of work today. The progressive perspectives, however, provide an opportunity to explore more fully how the workplace can be understood as a site for adult learning and development.

In sharp contrast to the objective, technical-rational conceptions of work based on the market model, many scholars, representing the fields of organizational studies, human relations, job redesign, and education now stress the inherent subjectivity of work, its existential meaning, and its relationship to others and to the natural world. Within this paradigm, the realities of work are seen as often much more messy and ambiguous than implied by the traditional, technical-rational perspective and Tayloristic views of the workplace are sharply criticized (Aktouf, 1992; Kincheloe, 1995). A central feature of this alternative perspective is the "person-centered" view of the workplace and the importance of the meaning of work to the individual worker in improving organizational life. Work is

viewed as vocation or calling and vital to individual development, reflecting a belief that we *live to work* (Sinetar, 1987), that the meaning we attribute to our work contributes a substantial portion of what we come to view as our life's meaning. This perspective focuses on the worker's experience within the job and stresses the importance of individual as well as organizational learning. The burgeoning "spirituality of work" literature (Bolman & Deal, 1995; Chappell, 1993; Dirkx & Deems, 1996; Hawley, 1993; Fox, 1994; McKnight, 1984; Whyte, 1994) also illuminates this deep-seated concern for the meaning of work. Working from theories of alienation, radical humanists, such as Omar Aktouf (1992) stress that workers need to experience their work as *vital work*, "a real, rather than a formal, appropriation....[an] extension of themselves, as an occasion for self-expression as well as for the pursuit and satisfaction of personal desires and interests that converge with those of the firm. (p. 419). This concern for the meaning of work to the individual is reflected in several different theoretical approaches to understanding the workplace.

This emerging paradigm also draws our attention to the ways in which work is organized or structured, and its social and political context. Studies of the workplace clearly reveal that how work is structured is a major factor in whether work is experienced as "either brutal and boring, enjoyable and exciting" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 154). Restructuring is evident in the move from Fordist, assembly-line approaches to teams working together, such as Volvo and Saturn's team approach to car manufacturing, as well attention to the *kinds* of work individuals are asked to perform (Fox (1994). An aspect of this restructuring of work is a growing recognition of the importance of the social context of work (Kincheloe, 1995). Aktouf (1992) asserts thatpeople...are fundamentally defined by community, society, and their relations with others. The relations in and through which people live, help them to construct and grasp their sense of self (which make them the ground and condition of self-realization)....all recognized "man's" nature is undeniably social and community-oriented. (p. 413) Team or group approaches to work and learning stress collaboration and cooperation among workers, rather than individual responsibility for particular tasks.

Increased emphasis is also being placed on a more progressive, democratic and just workplace, "a workplace that has respect for the worker and established dignity for citizenship (Lugg & Dentith, 1996, p. 40). Aktouf (1992) suggests that the desired "firm can result only through the combined efforts of individuals who are driven by the desire to cooperate, and this cooperation will be expressed through freedom of speech, greater autonomy, equity, and conviviality of all members" (p. 418). Welton (1991) argues thatIndustry is the *most important* area [for fostering a democratic society] because most individuals spend a great deal of their lifetime at work and business of the workplace provides an education in the management of collective affairs difficult to parallel elsewhere. Therefore, if individuals are to exercise the maximum amount of control over their own olives and environment, the authority structures in these areas must be organised so that individuals can participate in decision making. (p. 31).

Within the workplace, this emphasis is manifest as participative and self-management, self-leadership, and shared power. Worker participation in problem-solving and decision-making is a hallmark of this emerging paradigm, usually expressed through self-managed work teams and groups. Similar to self-management, self-leadership reinforces the importance of allowing workers control over their lives (Waterman, 1994). The management literature is filled with examples of the positive effects of workers assuming more control over their worklives and the negative consequences of denying or taking away that control. Sharing power reflects a fundamental belief that a moral workplace is achieved by stressing autonomy and freedom through service (Chappell, 1993).

Thus, changes instituted by a number of corporations and reinforced by research and theory provide strong evidence that the workplace can and should be different. A key feature of this emerging paradigm is the idea of the workplace as a site for individual and group learning.

Fostering the "Educative Workplace" Through HRD

The emerging paradigm reveals a view of work that is developmental, participatory, and self-authorizing, if not democratic. Considerable emphasis is placed on contextual or situational learning, in which worker-learners are collaboratively engaged in both problem-posing and problem-solving within their experience of work. As Welton (1991), points out, these qualities are educative and

contribute to a sense of the workplace as a primary site for adult learning and the practice of adult education.

Although "new" to the workplace, these characteristics reflect a long-standing moral and political tradition within adult education. In the first part of this century, Eduard Lindeman (1926/1961) argued that an individual's life is largely shaped by the institutions, politics, and economic forces of the times. For him, the meaning of adult education rested with its capacity to work for and help fully realize a democratic vision within society. Such a form of education was characterized by four assumptions which have come to be well known among adult educators today: (a) education *is* life, rather than a preparation for it; (b) the purpose of education is to put meaning into life and to provide opportunities for expressing the "total personality" of the person, rather than merely training individuals to perform specific functions; (c) the emphasis in adult education needs to be on the specific contexts in which adults find themselves, focusing on learners' needs and interests within these situations rather than subject matter; and (d) the most important resource within the learning setting is the individual's experience, which is, as Lindeman stated, "the adult learner's living textbook" (p. 7).

Lindeman's ideas formed a core set of assumptions about how adults learn, which many educators of adults today know as andragogy. Popularized by Knowles (1980), andragogy also became part of the lexicon of workplace learning. This reinterpretation of Lindeman's ideas, however, cast adult learning within an individualistic framework. Many workplace educators adapted these principles to social and political contexts structured largely to honor the corporate bottom line rather than fostering the broader, deomcratic vision inherent in Lindeman's ideas. As a result, much of HRD and workplace education assumes a traditional "schooling" quality, with emphasis being placed on *what is to be learned*. Process issues are considered as technical strategies to achieve pre-defined goals and objectives, in which workers have relatively little voice. While the so-called "quality improvement effort" was hailed as a new approach to involving workers in more democratic decision-making processes, many workers perceived interventions such as quality circles as little more than impotent structures designed to garner worker support and rubber stamp decisions already made by organizational executives. "Self-managed teams" are a recent reincarnation of a this approach to "democratizing" the workplace and they are floundering in many organizations for similar reasons. Reducing process issues to a kind of technical intervention ignores the profoundly different view of social and political relations that are inherent these more worker-centered ideas. Rather than being viewed as ends in themselves, they become means to ends that are largely economic and have little to do with fostering individual individual or strengthening democracy. In other words, HRD has been implicitly conceptualized by many practitioners as contributing to the smooth functioning of the corporate machine, a kind of educational lubricant to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of existing goals and structures.Andragogy has simply become pedagogy with an adult twist.

But the vision that Lindeman and others held for the field of adult education has not been abandoned in the workplace. Many researchers and practitioners recognize the andragogical qualities inherent in "good work" and continue to work for full implementation of these principles. In various ways, adult educators such as Brookfield (1986), Marsick (1987), Watkins (1991), and Mezirow (1991) redefined the meaning of andragogy by emphasizing the importance of fostering critical thinking, critical reflection, and other "learning-to-learn" strategies within adult learning. The work of Watkins and Marsick, both of whom see themselves as adult educators, has had an especially profound influence on revitalizing these ideas of adult learning within the workplace. Critical educators, however, argue that even these attempts to "reform" the concept of andragogy fail to take workplace education and training beyond their individual-centered approaches (Collins, 1991; Cunningham, 1993; Hart, 1992; Welton, 1991, 1995). Even critical educators, however, do not devalue the importance of the individual's experience of work. For example, Kincheloe (1995) argues that a critical postmodern pedagogy of work involves "an image of a just future grounded on a description of good work" (p. 66). Good work, according to Kincheloe involves a sense of completion and fulfillment, an engagement with the individual's meanings and purposes. Welton (1991) argues, "The empirical evidence from work and personality studies certainly suggests that good work is a normative need for human beings" (p. 41). By "good work" Welton suggests a content of work that provides "opportunities for development of worker wellbeing" (p. 32). In exploring subsistence work, Hart (1992, p. 177) argues for a view of work which "acknowledges rather than

denies the natural foundation of human existence," an understanding of work as oriented "towards use and life."

Critical educators, however, find revisionist versions of andragogy to be inadequate for overcoming the alienating structures within the workplace and they draw workplace educators back to the social justice and democratic themes to which Lindeman gave voice in *The Meaning of Adult Education*. They stress the importance of attending to the ways in which work is structured, and the social and power relations which condition our experience of the meaning of work. According to Kincheloe, "the core of the crisis of America's workforce is a crisis of democracy" (p. 5). Welton (1991, p. 31) argues that "industry is the *most important* area [for fostering a democratic society]" because we spend so much of our lives at work. Within the business of the workplace, we experience an "education in the management of collective affairs" that is hard to match in others spheres of our lives. For these experiences to be truly educative, however, work needs to be organized so that individuals can engage and participate in decision-making. Welton and other educators concerned with the relationship of education and work stress the importance of participatory qualities and skills in the workplace which can only be developed through democratization of its social and political structures.

The process issues so prominent in the emerging views of work are also prominent facets of adult education practice as well. Rather than predefining the goals of workplace learning through some kind of "scientific," technical strategy, an HRD practice guided by the vision of adult education for democracy would emphasize what Welton (1991) refers to as the "educative workplace," in which worker-learners together in groups define for themselves within the process itself what it is that is meaningful and significant to learn.

HRD practitioners, as well as managers and supervisors assume more of an "enabling" role (Welton, 1991) within this environment and become resources for the worker-learners. Within this model, more attention is given to the kinds of work individuals are asked to perform and the ways in which that work is structured and organized. These issues provide opportunities for workers to engage in thoughtful, meaningful, and critical ways of learning and influencing their work environments. When HRD framed within the context of the emerging paradigm of work and as a form of adult education, it will then see itself as being about the business of fostering learning environments within the workplace.

When conceptualized as a form of adult education, the practice of HRD can make significant contributions to transforming workplaces into truly educative environments. While I agree, with Brookfield (1986) that adult educators should become more aware of HRD as a form of educational practice, the future of HRD needs to be informed by the tradition of adult education committed to furthering a just and democratic society. In such a model, the motto above the HRD manager's desk might read, "It's the democracy, stupid."

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